

UFO INVESTIGATOR



NICAP, 5012 Del Ray Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20014, (301) 654-8091

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NEW PICTURE BOOK ON UFOS

Does this sound like another hastily pasted up book meant to decorate coffee tables, but not to be read? One that dwells on the bizarre and the sensational? One that drags out medieval prints of strangely garbed Italians looking at comets? One that in uncritical acceptance prints wild stories that have circulated about UFOs over the years?

Well it is a pleasure to say that it isn't. It is a worthy addition to any UFO fan's library. It was written for adults but it could be profitably read by any intelligent 10 year old. We hope school libraries buy it in large numbers. The book is: UFOS: A Pictorial History from Antiquity to the Present by David C. Knight, McGraw-Hill, 1979, 192pp. It is underpriced at \$12.95. It is a high quality work in every respect.

As the title says, there is heavy emphasis on pictures, and the photo layout is informative and appealing. There is no running text as such, but the captions to the pictures frequently run from a quarter to half a page. They are full of relevant information and when read consecutively constitute a short history of the UFO era since 1947. (The Antiquity part of the title should not scare off today's reader; the part of the book up to 1947 only takes up about 15 percent of the space.)

Mr. Knight has unquestionably done his homework. In a remarkably short space he discusses, with accuracy and without animosity, such things as Projects SIGN, GRUDGE and BLUE BOOK, the Condon Report, abduction allegations, Betty and Barney Hill, the Zamora sighting in Socorro and many others. And where evidence of a hoax has been widely accepted he states so. This book is a welcome addition to UFO literature.

FRENCH SIGHTING

A European colleague has sent us a report of a sighting of long duration near Paris. Residents of the town of Dammarie reported to the police that they were seeing a strange object in the sky over the town. Several of the local policemen kept the object under observation for the next 45 minutes. The object hovered motionless over the town for this period and then moved on to the next town, Chailly-en-Biere. Finally it passed beyond that town and disappeared over the horizon. The policemen took notes on what they had seen and filed a report with the prefecture. The object had a yellow-orange color and the intensity of its light pulsed.

WHY SO LATE, A TEXAS SIGHTING

Not to scold, but if we are going to put together our knowledge of UFOs we have to tell it to one another. Quickly.

A letter from a Texas lady tells about luminous objects in the sky. She observed them with binoculars braced against the house for steadiness. She remembers them to be about the size of a dime held at arm's length, a good on-the-ground measurement.

It was 13 years ago. She was embarrassed. Her husband did not believe her. But her mother saw the phenomena.

Several weeks later she saw a bright red object about 25 degrees above the horizon do a down, left, right, again left and finally down pattern. And then quickly disappear. Later she told a neighbor about her experience. The neighbor said that she had seen the same thing. Thirteen years ago.

All inputs are welcome, but we have to report them faster than that.

WASHINGTON AREA SIGHTING

We have a sighting report from an observer with excellent credentials. He is a cartographer with the U.S. Geological Survey. He did a tour in Antarctica where he monitored geodetic satellites. While there he also spent a lot of time looking at star positions and intensities. During the time in Antarctica he never saw anything unusual.

But back in the U.S. he did. He was 30 miles west of Washington DC, at about 7:00 a.m. The sun was not yet up. He was facing west which was still very dark. Among the stars he noticed a bright object moving slowly in relation to the stars and increasing in brightness. Then it changed direction to the north and disappeared as a streak of light. The observer believes that the object just went out of sight rather than cease to give off light. He has observed many shooting stars and he believes that what he saw was not one.

CIA "FILES" ON UFOS

This is a continuation of the report on UFOs, CIA and the Freedom of Information Act which began in the September issue.

It is surprising how many people who live away from Washington do not realize the high degree to which government message routing indicators use arbitrary "code" words. The mail goes faster that way. For example, one office gets priority action on any message saying SEAGULL. A different office has to handle all LEAP FROG messages. Nothing secret about it. It is a routing system.

THE ROBERTSON COMMITTEE

Gen. Smith formed a committee to study the evidence and advise the government. None of its members were employees of CIA, although some had acted as consultants to the Agency as they had for a number of other government agencies. The members of the committee were as follows, with their positions shown as of the time they served on the committee.

Chairman: Dr. H. P. Robertson, Chairman of the Department of Physics, California Institute of Technology.
 Member: Dr. Luis W. Alvarez, University of California.
 Member: Dr. Lloyd V. Berkner, President, Associated Universities, Inc.
 Member: Dr. Samuel Goudsmit, Chairman of the Department of Physics, Brookhaven National Laboratories.
 Member: Dr. Thornton Page, Office of Research Operations, Johns Hopkins University.
 Associate: Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Ohio State University.
 Associate: Mr. Frederick C. Durant, Arthur D. Little, Inc.

This was the Robertson Committee. They were briefed by and they interviewed a dozen or more specialists whose names are too numerous to mention (the names are all in the CIA file) whose affiliations included the Air Technical Intelligence Center, CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence and the U.S. Navy's Photographic Interpretation Laboratory.

The Robertson Committee met from 14 to 17 January 1953. It reached two conclusions and made two recommendations.

NEW BOOK, DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

What are UFOs? The more we bring the hard look of traditional science to bear on the question, the more we learn what they are not. That, of course, is a plus. At the other end of the scale many conservative observers do not feel comfortable with the sensationally reported stories about little green men or visitors from outer space. Is there room between for an approach to the question that one can read and judge on its merits?

Yes. It is a new and thought provoking book. *UFO Phenomena and the Behavioral Scientists*, edited by Richard F. Haines, The Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, N.J. and London, 1979, 449 pp. It will not be everybody's cup of tea (but then, what is everybody's cup of tea?). What the book does do is to give audience and dignity to the research and conclusions of a dozen writers who have spent effort and diligence in trying to push out the frontiers of our knowledge of what we know and why we think we know it. In this book nobody is especially concerned with weighing things or measuring their length from head to foot. These are certainly useful things to do, but they are not the concern of these writers.

MEMBERSHIP-RENEWAL APPLICATION

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Rather, as the editor says, the purpose here is to "try to find the most effective process for discovering what is considered mysterious."

The approaches are many, as one would expect from a dozen different authors. But all the articles expand our vision and permit us new insights into what the UFO phenomena are. The language may strike some people as academic. That is understandable because all of the writers hold academic positions. But that should not put anybody off of the message they are trying to get across: there are things we "know" but don't know why we know them. These are the voices of respected scientists in the "soft" scientific field of why we behave as we do.

Consider Phillis Fox in the opening article. She reports that humans do not see things in the same way that a camera does. She says that to a large degree we see what we want to see and expect to see. And on the other side, we tend to reject that which we don't want to see. The things that influence what we want to see or don't want to see can be personal, social or cultural. Whatever, they strongly influence our individual behaviors. In short, the Hopi Indian and the wealthy Zurich banker very probably do not share the same value patterns.

Another article, by Armando Simon, conducts an extensive survey of how the spirit of the times has been reflected in the themes and portraits that have appeared in one medium, movies, over a period of more than 60 years. The article includes a detailed list of more than 190 English language movies that have been produced in the years since 1902 but the list ends in 1969, more than a decade ago. There are probably a lot more now. The article says that differing portrayals of the friendliness or hostility of the space visitors can be seen to correspond directly to public attitudes of curiosity, a feeling of well being, fear, awe of science and other such perceptions about the state of the world at the time the moves were made. What should a UFO occupant look like? This stimulating article reminds us of many things we tend to forget. As was said before, we tend to see what we want to see and reject that which we don't. Because it is familiar to us, we humans want to think in terms of what is called bilateral symmetry; that is two arms, two legs, two eyes, two ears and so forth. But there is life all around us on this planet that doesn't work that way. For example, the kangaroo is sometimes a four-legged animal and sometimes three-legged (the tail). Some bottom fish have both eyes on one side of their head and none on the other. The authors conclude that the majority of UFO occupants they have studied are "suspiciously human-like." But they could come in lots of other shapes and forms.

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